

(e) Because actions having effects on the United States may to varying degrees be initiated, influenced and conducted by other countries, it is recognized that the preparation of environmental documents for such actions must be adjusted to meet a variety of circumstances. Bearing in mind the degree to which other countries possess information on and the ability to affect the decision under consideration, responsible action officers shall seek at all times to prepare environmental analysis documents as early as feasible in the decisionmaking process.

§ 161.6 Responsibilities of departmental officials.

(a) *General.* As a general rule, responsibility for preparing environmental analysis documents will follow the Department's standard organizational practices; in this way environmental considerations and awareness of environmental responsibilities will be integrated most readily and effectively into the usual decisionmaking processes.

(1) *Departmental bureaus.* Each bureau within the Department shall be responsible for:

(i) Implementing these regulations and incorporating them into its normal decisionmaking processes;

(ii) Identifying actions it intends to initiate which may affect significantly the environment of the United States and employing the environmental evaluation procedures outlined in these regulations to ensure that necessary actions are taken to meet the requirements of applicable laws and regulations;

(iii) Coordinating environmental assessment-related activities for which it is responsible with the Office of Environment and Health in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs and supporting and assisting the Office of Environment and Health in implementing these regulations as required; and

(iv) Providing the personnel required to implement these regulations, informing the Office of Environment and Health and the Office of the Legal Adviser whenever it is anticipated that environmental documents will be prepared under these regulations, and con-

sulting the Office of Environment and Health and the Office of the Legal Adviser as necessary for guidance and assistance in the preparation of such documents.

(2) *Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs.* Through its Office of Environment and Health the Bureau shall have the primary responsibility for ensuring the Department's compliance with environmental policies, regulations and procedures. It shall provide policy and professional direction and guidance within the Department for implementing these regulations. It shall also assist other bureaus in obtaining appropriate scientific advice and budgetary resources to implement the regulations. The Office of Environment and Health will act as the focal point for implementation, working closely with the Departmental bureaus and the Office of the Legal Adviser. The Bureau and other involved bureaus will work closely with the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations in the preparation of environmental documents relating to legislation. In carrying out its responsibilities the Bureau shall:

(i) Coordinate the formulation, development and revision of Departmental policies and positions on matters pertaining to environmental evaluation and review;

(ii) Develop and ensure the implementation of Departmentwide standards, procedures and working relationships for environmental review and compliance with applicable environmental laws and regulations;

(iii) Develop, as an integral part of the Department's basic decision processes, procedures to ensure that environmental factors are properly considered in all relevant proposals and decisions;

(iv) Monitor these processes to ensure that Departmental procedures are achieving their purposes;

(v) Advise, assist and inform Departmental bureaus of the technical and management aspects of environmental analysis, and of the relevant expertise available in and outside the Department;

(vi) Establish and maintain working relationships with the Council on Environmental Quality, Environmental Protection Agency, and other federal, State and local governmental agencies concerned with environmental matters;

(vii) Represent the Department in working with other government agencies and organizations to formulate, revise and achieve uniform understanding and application of government-wide policies relating to the environment;

(viii) Consolidate and transmit to the appropriate parties Departmental comments on environmental impact statements and other environmental reports prepared by other agencies; and

(ix) Acquire information for and prepare other Departmental reports on environmental assessment matters.

(3) *Office of the Legal Adviser.* The Office of the Legal Adviser is the principal Departmental authority on the legal aspects of environmental matters and the implementation of these regulations and shall advise and assist Departmental Bureaus in these matters.

(4) *Bureau Environmental Coordinators.* Each Departmental bureau and major office shall designate an officer to act as coordinator, adviser and principal point of contact for environmental matters within the bureau. The bureau coordinator will advise and assist the bureau in implementing these regulations and serve as a member of the Departmental Committee of Environmental Coordinators.

(5) *Departmental Committee of Environmental Coordinators.* A Departmental Committee of Environmental Coordinators shall be established to assist in coordinating Departmental implementation of these regulations; in providing advice on major issues, policies and procedures relating to the Department's implementation of environmental analysis requirements; and in ensuring general conformity of Departmental implementation practices. The Committee's responsibility will be to exchange information on the implementation of these regulations, assist bureaus in early identification of Departmental actions which should be analyzed for environmental effects and help to coordinate and provide the appropriate analysis. The Committee will

be chaired by the Office of Environment and Health and will be comprised of bureau and office coordinators designated by the respective bureaus and offices.

(6) *Outside contractors.* Qualified outside contractors may be employed to assist Departmental officers in preparing environmental documents as required under these regulations.

§ 161.7 Categories of actions.

Departmental officers shall review each major Departmental action having a potentially significant effect on the quality of the environment in the United States. The need to prepare formal environmental documents will depend on the scope of the action and the context and intensity of any environmental effects expected if the action is implemented. Departmental actions can generally be grouped into three categories, as follows:

(a) *Actions normally requiring environmental impact statements.* Any Departmental action deemed to have a "significant effect upon the quality of the human environment" of the United States requires the preparation of an environmental impact statement. The criteria to be used in determining significance are set forth in § 1508.27 of the CEQ Regulations. The Department has reviewed representative actions and has found no common pattern which would enable it to specify actions normally requiring environmental impact statements. If developments later enable such designations to be made the Department will publish a description of proposed actions for such designation in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(b) *Actions categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare environmental impact statements.* Categorical exclusion, as defined in § 1508.4 of the CEQ Regulations, provides for exclusion from environmental review of specified actions which have as a class been found to have no significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is ordinarily required for such actions. Departmental actions categorically excluded from the requirements of these regulations include the following: